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THE AMERICAN JOURNAL
OF
SEMITIC LANGUAGES AND LITERATURES
(CONTINUING HEBRAICA)

VOLUME XXVI

JANUARY, 1910

NUMBER 2

A SUGGESTION AS TO THE FIRST FORM OF
II KINGS 13

BY HOWELL M. HAYDN
Western Reserve University

By the "first form" of this chapter is meant the form given it by the first Deuteronomic editor (commonly called R^D) in his work, which is generally recognized to have contained less material than the present book of Kings. The aim of this article will be two-fold: (a) To determine those parts of the chapter which are later than R^D, together with their sources; and (b) to exhibit the form of the chapter as originally written by R^D, through the elimination of these later portions, and the restoration of what remains to its proper order.

a) The chapter, as it stands, divides itself into: (1) an account of the reign of Jehoahaz of Israel, vv. 1-9; (2) an account of the reign of Jehoash of Israel, vv. 10-13, 22-25; and (3) the stories of the death of Elisha and of the miraculous efficacy of his bones, vv. 14-21, which separate the narrative concerning Jehoash into two parts.

In (1), vv. 1, 2 present the regular R^D formula for the beginning of a reign of the Northern Kingdom while vv. 8, 9 do the same for the end of a reign. V. 7 is generally regarded as having been drawn from an earlier historical source by R^D. Upon vv. 4-6 opinion is

divided, some recent authorities, as Benzinger¹ and Skinner,² holding them to be later than R^D, and others, as Burney³ and Kent,⁴ to be simply R^D's comment. V. 3 Kent holds to be R^D, while Benzinger, Burney, and Skinner would assign it to his earlier historical source, although Skinner is not entirely satisfied so to do, as will appear presently. The problem of vv. 3-6 centers in the determination of the person referred to in the "For he" of v. 7, "For he left not to Jehoahaz," etc. Who is "he"? Manifestly it is no one mentioned in vv. 5, 6, which probably accounts for the putting of these two verses in parenthesis by the English Revisers of 1885 and the American Revisers of 1901, an arrangement, however, which ignores the internal connection between vv. 4 and 5, and still leaves the "he" ambiguous. Benzinger and Skinner both make clear the unity of vv. 4 and 5, and refer the "he" back to v. 3, not v. 4, but their agreement ends here, since Benzinger is sure that "he" is the king of Syria, and Skinner equally certain that "he" can mean only Jahweh. Burney avoids the difficulty very cleverly by taking the construction of v. 7 as impersonal, "For there was not left to Jehoahaz," etc., and as he can cite the renderings of LXX, Luc., Vulg. and Syriac in support of his position, as well as Hebrew parallels, he makes out a strong case. Kent avoids the force of the כִּי by translating v. 7, "And he left not," etc.

None of these solutions serve to clear up beyond question the identity of the one referred to in the "for he," and therefore the present writer ventures to suggest another, which involves a new theory as to the first form of the whole chapter. His start is taken from the work of Benzinger and Skinner, who, in contending for the unity of vv. 4 and 5, bring out an element in those verses which argues rather for the unity of vv. 3-5. Indeed, Skinner seems to appreciate this, for he hints at his impression of the unity of vv. 3-5, and does not find satisfaction in the analysis he finally accepts. This common element, which Benzinger recognizes in vv. 4 and 5, and Skinner in vv. 3-5 (but without following up), is found in certain phrases which strongly suggest the editorial framework of

¹ A. T., *Kurzer Hand-Commentar*, "Könige," 1899, p. 162.

² *New Century Bible*, "Kings," pp. 347 f.

³ *Notes on the Hebr. Text of Kings*, 1903, pp. 315, 316.

⁴ *Student's O. T.*, Vol. II, 1905, pp. 246, 247.

Judges. Thus, v. 3: "And the anger of Jahweh was kindled against Israel, and He delivered them into the hand of," cf. Judg. 2:14, and also Judg. 3:8 and 10:7, where "sold" occurs instead of "delivered." Again, v. 4: "The king of Syria *oppressed* them." This same word for oppress, לָחַץ, is found in Judg. 2:18 and 10:12 following the phrase "And the anger of Jahweh," etc., as here. Once more, v. 5: "And Jahweh gave Israel a Saviour," cf. Judg. 3:9 and 3:15, where the phrase is: "Jahweh *raised up* a Saviour," a very slight difference. The parallelism of these verses, II Kings 13:3-5, with Judges is most strikingly exhibited by placing them side by side with one particular series of verses from that book, which has just been quoted under the several phrases, viz.: Judg. 3:8, 9. It is true that in this passage "the children of Israel *cried unto* Jahweh," while Jehoahaz "*besought* Jahweh"—Brown-Driver-Briggs *Lexicon* "appealed Jahweh"—a different expression, but nevertheless the parallelism is very striking, and can hardly be accidental.

As against Kent, who holds that v. 3 belongs to R^D, and Burney, Benzinger, and, reluctantly, Skinner, who hold that it was drawn by R^D from an earlier historical source, the writer, then, would contend, on the basis of its like parallelism with phrases from the editorial framework of Judges, that v. 3 goes with vv. 4, 5, and is later than R^D.

It is significant just here that the phrase: "And the anger of Jahweh was kindled against Israel" does not occur elsewhere in the book of Kings,⁵ although the phrase that generally precedes it in Judges: "And the children of Israel did that which was evil in the sight of Jahweh," adapted to the individual king, is one of R^D's stock expressions. This would seem to make against R^D's authorship of the phrase here, and so against his writing of v. 3. And as to the more usual theory that v. 3 was drawn by R^D from his earlier historical source, while it is very evident that to say somebody's "anger was kindled" was the usual phrase in the historical books, when that idea was to be set forth, and while further the phrase: "And the anger of Jahweh was kindled" occurs in Exod., Num., Deut., and Sam., and even the phrase: "And the anger of Jahweh was kindled against Israel," in Num. 25:3 and 32:13, and, with

⁵ For the nearest approach to it, see II Kings 23:26.

another form of the verb, in II Sam. 24:1—some of which passages would doubtless be classed as from early sources—still it is to be observed that the *whole phrase* of v. 3: "And the anger of Jahweh was kindled . . . and He delivered . . . into the hand of" is found *only* here and in Judg. 2:14, in what might be called the editor's preface. This being so, even though the *possibility* that v. 3 was drawn by R^D from earlier historical material cannot be denied, the balance of *probability* would seem to incline to the view of the present writer that v. 3 belongs with vv. 4, 5, and is later than R^D.

V. 6, the only verse of (1) remaining, is of no importance in this particular discussion. It may well be a later gloss upon v. 4, as Benzinger suggests. Its clumsy repetition of a part of v. 2 shows that it is, at any rate, later than R^D, and so an addition to his text. To sum up, then, the results of the discussion thus far, Benzinger and Skinner hold that II Kings 13:4, 5 are from an editor or redactor later than R^D—call him R^J for convenience—whose phraseology is modeled on that of the editor of the Book of Judges. The present writer agrees entirely with them, but he would add v. 3 to those assigned to R^J, and his analysis of vv. 1–9 would therefore be:

Vv. 1–2, R^D's formula.

Vv. 3–5, a later addition by R^J.

V. 6, a still later gloss.

V. 7, R^D's extract from an earlier source.

Vv. 8–9, R^D's formula.

(2) At the outset of the account of Jehoash's reign—vv. 10–13, 22–25—occurs R^D's familiar introductory formula, vv. 10, 11, to which vv. 12–13 supply a very startling continuation, to say the least, since they summarily terminate Jehoash's life and activities, in phrases all but identical with R^D's concluding formula, before they have been well started. Manifestly, something is wrong with these verses (12, 13). Either, as Kent suggests, they are a late addition, made by a copyist who failed to note the entirely regular R^D formula for the end of Jehoash's reign at 14:15–16, or, they are genuine, but misplaced, parts of R^D's work, belonging properly where they are actually found in Lucian's text, at the end of the thirteenth chapter, after vv. 24, 25.

Either theory is beset with difficulties, though the present writer is inclined to accept Lucian's text here, as affording the better solu-

tion of the two. If, indeed, the very tempting hypothesis that 14:8-16 originally formed a part of the narrative of *Jehoash* and not, as it stands, of *Amaziah*, coming after 13:25—if this could be successfully maintained, then the view that 13:12, 13 is a late addition would be preferable; but the implications of 14:1-7 probably preclude such a transposition of verses. Regarding vv. 22-25, vv. 22, 24, 25 are most naturally taken as a part of R^D's work, extracts from his earlier historical source. They certainly read like other verses which are so classified elsewhere in the book, and are generally so assigned.

V. 23 is a didactic comment in a vein a shade more diffuse than R^D allows himself, and is assigned by Benzinger to the same R^J who has been already described in connection with vv. 3-5. Benzinger is followed in this by Skinner, and the present writer accepts their conclusions, which also include, it may be added, the assignment of vv. 26, 27 of chap. 14 to this same R^J. (Note the expression "Saved" in 14:27, parallel to the "Saviour" of 13:5.) The analysis of (2), then, would be as follows:

Vv. 10, 11, R^P's formula.

Vv. 12, 13, misplaced verses, probably belonging after v. 25.

V. 22, R^P's extract from an earlier source.

V. 23, a later addition by R^J.

Vv. 24, 25, R^P's extract from an earlier source.

(3) The present writer will hardly need to say, after the analyses of (1) and (2) just given, that he holds the Elisha stories of vv. 14-19 and vv. 20, 21 to be insertions in the text, and later than R^D. This assumption is, indeed, vital to his theory of the original form of the chapter, but, entirely apart from that consideration, it is not by any means an unlikely one. There is evident in the Elijah and Elisha narratives in Kings a freedom and picturesqueness of style foreign to R^D, generally ascribed to the influence of oral transmission, and it is surely very possible that they are later insertions in R^D's work. Hence, while the assumption, in the very nature of the case, can never be proved, the possibility of its correctness is enough to justify the present writer in developing his theory of the chapter. And the same is true of the further assumption, likewise essential to the writer's theory, that these Elisha stories were inserted in the chapter at a time later even than R^J. The number of redactions through

which such a book as Kings passed before reaching its present form can never be so absolutely determined as to preclude such a possibility, and in the manifest confusion of the present text of the chapter, any theory which will bring order out of chaos, provided it be not an utterly impossible one, is worth following out. The writer's analysis of (3) would then be:

Vv. 14-19, 20-21, Elisha stories, inserted by a redactor later than both R^p and R^j.

b) The data therefor having been assembled by the above analysis, the reconstruction of the first (R^D's) form of the chapter will now be attempted. First of all, of course, came vv. 1, 2, beginning the account of Jehoahaz's reign in R^D's usual manner. Then, since vv. 3-6 are by hypothesis later than R^D, would come v. 7, R^D's extract from his earlier historical source. But v. 7 forms the conclusion of a sentence, whose beginning is manifestly *not* vv. 1, 2. Its first word is "*for*." This gap must be bridged, somehow, and only verses assigned to R^D by the foregoing analysis, of course, are available for doing it. Vv. 8, 9 are R^D's, but they find their proper place after, not before, v. 7, in concluding the account of Jehoahaz's reign, and vv. 12, 13, probably also R^D's, while out of place where they stand, concern Jehoash, not Jehoahaz, and would not fit here anyway. Vv. 14-21 also concern Jehoash in a way and are by hypothesis later than R^D. This brings v. 22 into consideration as next in order, and also, by the analysis, an extract by R^D from his earlier historical source, which being likewise the case with v. 7, the two verses have that much in common, at least. It is also to be noted that v. 22 seems out of place where it stands, and is not really needed to explain vv. 24, 25. (V. 23 is later than R^D by hypothesis.) If v. 22, then, be inserted between v. 2 and v. 7, the whole R^D passage concerning Jehoahaz, beginning with v. 1, would read as follows: "In the three and twentieth year of Joash Jehoahaz began to reign and he did that which was evil. . . . And Hazael King of Syria oppressed Israel all the days of Jehoahaz. For there was not left to Jehoahaz⁶ of the people save fifty horsemen for the king of Syria destroyed them. . . . Now the rest of the acts of Jehoahaz, and all that he did and Joash his son reigned in his stead."

⁶ Burney's rendering, see under (1) in *a*).

The present writer would contend that this restoration is entirely in the manner of R^D, as he again and again combines his extracts from earlier sources with his familiar formulae, to describe the reigns of the different kings of Israel. It provides, moreover, a perfectly clear antecedent to the "for" or "for he" of v. 7 in: "Hazeal king of Syria oppressed Israel," and that, too, without breaking into the manifest unity of vv. 3-5, as all other theories of the passage do. Before suggesting on what principle R^J worked in displacing v. 22 and inserting vv. 3-5 in its place, it will be well to complete the first form of the entire chapter according to the theory of the present writer. Thus far, it is contended, R^D's original order ran: vv. 1-2, 22, 7-9. This finished the account of Jehoahaz. Vv. 10, 11 followed vv. 8, 9 as now, beginning the account of Jehoash's reign, and then came vv. 24, 25, continuing that account, with vv. 12, 13, probably,⁷ to bring it to an end in the usual manner of R^D and to close the original chap. 13. The assumptions involved herein, respecting vv. 12-13, 23, and 14-21, have already been discussed.

This then—i. e., 13:1-2, 22, 7-11, 24-25, 12-13 (probably)—was the passage R^D composed, and R^J found and modified, according to the theory, by the insertion of vv. 3-5 and 23. What was the principle upon which R^J worked? Can his process of reasoning be so far recovered as to render such insertions by him probable? The writer is persuaded that it can be, substantially as follows: While reading R^D's work one day, he noticed what *appeared to him* to be a contradiction in the statement of v. 22—which then, it will be remembered, stood next to v. 2, and concerned Jehoahaz—as compared with that of v. 25—which then, with v. 24, followed immediately after v. 11, and concerned Jehoash. V. 22 says that "*Hazeal* King of Syria oppressed Israel all the days of Jehoahaz," but v. 25 says that: "Jehoash the son of Jehoahaz took again out of the hand of *Ben-hadad* the son of Hazeal the cities which he had taken out of the hand of Jehoahaz." "How can that be," thought R^J, "if *Hazeal* oppressed Israel *all the days of* Jehoahaz?" And therefore he determined to correct R^D's blunder. But R^J noted another thing in v. 22. It says that Hazeal "oppressed" (יָרָם) Israel and this rare word at once recalled to R^J the familiar passages

⁷ So Lucian's text. See the discussion in a), (2).

in Judges where it is also used. If now there be added to these two components of R^J's state of mind, a third which has been suggested by Skinner, i. e., a great admiration for king Jeroboam II, proof of which is found in 14:26, 27, it is reasonably clear why he put vv. 3-5 in the place of v. 22, and why also vv. 3-5 took the form they did. R^J wished first of all to correct R^D's historical slip by making Ben-hadad also, as well as his father Hazael, an oppressor of Israel in the days of Jehoahaz (see v. 3), and while he was doing that, he thought he would improve the opportunity to enlarge upon R^D by an improving story, told after the manner of Judges, which should picture Jehoahaz as humbling himself under Jahweh's chastening hand, and thus helping to bring to Israel a "Saviour," in the person of his (R^J's) great hero, Jeroboam II (see v. 5; cf. 14:27).

So much for R^J's insertion of vv. 3-5 in place of v. 22. What, now, should he do with v. 22? Should he suppress it altogether? Why do that, now that he has corrected any misconception to which it might give rise? Rather, let it come in as a fitting introduction to the conquests of Jehoash, and as a peg on which to hang a further word of encouragement. So he inserts it after the beginning of the account of Jehoash (v. 11), and writes v. 23 in comment, having in mind Jehoash's victories, and advancing toward his climax in the greater deeds of Jeroboam II. Burney notes that Lucian's text puts v. 23 after v. 7, and prefers that order as easier to account for than the present text, but he does not follow Benzinger and Skinner in holding to a later redaction by R^J, as does the writer. Lucian's variant order may well be taken as a further indication of the confusion of the text of chap. 13—already undeniably evident from other verses, e. g., 12-13—without giving it the preference over the Massoretic text here.

In conclusion, it will be desirable to place side by side chap. 13 as left by R^D, and as left by R^J, thus (reading continuously in either case):

R^D, vv. 1-2, 22, 7-11, 24-25, 12-13.

R^J, vv. 1-5, 7-11, 22-25, 12-13.

Later hands inserted v. 6 and vv. 14-21 in the chapter, and changed the position of vv. 12-13.